

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, February 13, 2004

JOINT ATF-MPDC OPERATIONS TARGETS GUNS AND DRUGS

This week, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Washington, DC Field Division, and the MPDC announced that 18 suspects have been arrested for Federal firearms and drug charges in DC, Virginia and Maryland. The arrest and search warrants are the result of an 18-month ATF and MPDC undercover investigation into firearms trafficking and violent crime in the DC region. The investigation in DC focused on the Mount Pleasant and Columbia Heights neighborhoods, where police responded to a spate of gang violence last summer. The investigation used specially trained ATF undercover agents who successfully made "hand-to-hand" purchases of firearms and various forms of cocaine from the suspects. More than 30 firearms, and approximately 1,500 grams of crack cocaine and more than 200 grams of powdered cocaine, were purchased during the undercover operation. Teams of ATF agents, MPDC officers and authorities in Maryland and Virginia began serving arrest and search warrants earlier in the week to apprehend the 18 suspects. Five suspects remain at large. The defendants have been charged with a variety of Federal firearms and narcotics violations.

① For more details, read the news releases at:
www.mpdcc.org/blue/news.asp?sid=2572

① For more on DC's gun laws, gun violence and gun safety tips, see:
www.mpdcc.org/info/family/gunsafety.shtml

① In an effort to raise awareness of gun violence, MPDC continues to participate in the "Coaches Against Gun Violence" program, organized by the DC-based Alliance for Justice. A "Coaches" event is scheduled for February 18 at Ballou Senior HS in SE, where a student was shot and killed earlier this month. Details at:
www.CoachesAgainstGunViolence.org

CRIME IN DC DECLINES 12 PERCENT IN JANUARY

Serious crime in the District of Columbia declined more than 12 percent last month when compared with January 2003, according to MPDC preliminary crime statistics. Citywide, there were reductions in seven of the nine major crime categories. These included 20 percent reductions in both burglaries and thefts from auto. Double-digit decreases for the month were also recorded in sexual assaults (-16%), aggravated assaults (-11%) and arsons (-22%). The only crimes that increased in January were homicides (+35%, from 17 to 23) and robberies (+15%). Five of the seven police districts recorded decreases in crime in January, according to the preliminary data. The First District had the largest reduction of 25 percent, followed by the Third District, which had a 23 percent decline. Reported crime rose in the Sixth (15%) and Seventh (1%) Districts last month.

These statistics are based on preliminary DC Index crime data queried on February 6, 2004. The data do not represent official statistics submitted to the FBI under the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. All preliminary offenses are coded based on DC criminal code and not the FBI offense classifications. All statistics are subject to change due to a variety of reasons, such as a change in classification, the determination that certain offense reports were unfounded, or late reporting.

① View January preliminary crime statistics for each of the seven police districts and DC as a whole by clicking on:
mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/crstats_readthis.shtml

AUTO THEFT ADVISORY: DON'T LEAVE YOUR VEHICLES UNATTENDED

Last year, more than 9,000 auto thefts were reported in DC, an increase of 10% from the previous year. National statistics indicate that more than 20% of vehicles stolen had the key left in the ignition. In recent weeks, several vehicles have been stolen in DC because the motor was running and the vehicle left unattended. During the winter season, some people will run their vehicle to warm it up while they remain indoors. Motorists are reminded that it is against the law to leave a motor vehicle running unattended. A motorist can receive a \$50 ticket and the vehicle could be impounded. Motorists are asked to take appropriate measures to avoid being the victim of auto theft and not leave their vehicle running unattended.

① More auto theft prevention tips:
mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/autoteft.shtml

① As a further protection against auto theft, the MPDC encourages all DC vehicle owners to participate in the free "Watch Your Car" program. Details at:
mpdc.dc.gov/serv/programs/wyc.shtml

A NEW LOOK FOR SOME MPDC OFFICERS—BATTLE DRESS UNIFORMS

The MPDC officer in your neighborhood may be sporting a new look in the near future. This past week, the MPDC began a six-month pilot project in which PSA officers and sergeants are authorized to wear Battle Dress Uniforms—or BDUs—while on neighborhood patrol duties. The navy blue BDUs consist of cargo-style trousers and shirts (both long- and short-sleeve) that are more comfortable, flexible and cooler to wear during the warmer weather than the traditional police uniform. The BDUs also include an eight-point “soft cap” that is similar in style to a baseball cap. In the past, BDUs have generally been reserved for Special Operations personnel. Under the pilot project, the uniforms are now authorized for PSA officers and sergeants, as well as district Focused Mission Team officers and sergeants assigned to patrol duties. Lieutenants and above in these assignments will continue to wear the traditional MPDC uniform. The BDUs will be purchased at the individual members’ expense and will conform to MPDC standards. Badges, patches, nameplates and other insignia will continue to be worn by those officers who choose to wear BDUs.

NEWS & NOTES

Drug Free Zones. The MPDC is enforcing DC’s anti-loitering law this weekend in designated drug free zones in PSA 102 in Sursum Corda, as well as portions of PSAs 106 and 507 in Northeast. Additional drug free zones are planned for the coming weeks. Details on this program at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/drugfreezone.shtm>

Chatting with the Chief. Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues and takes phone calls during his monthly appearance on WHUR 96.3-FM, on Tuesday, February 17, from 6:40 to 7 pm.

Neighborhood Citizen Summits. As a follow up to last fall’s Citizen Summit III, Mayor Williams is holding a series of “Neighborhood Citizen Summits” in each of DC’s eight wards during February. For dates, times and locations, visit <http://neighborhoodaction.dc.gov/neighborhoodaction/site/default.asp>

Presidents Day Closings. In observance of Presidents Day, most administrative offices of the MPDC will be closed on Monday, February 16. Police patrols, emergency communications and other essential operations will be fully staffed.

PSA Restructuring Hearing. DC Council Judiciary Committee Chair Kathy Patterson has scheduled a hearing on the MPDC’s Police Service Area (PSA) Restructuring plan for Tuesday, February 24, at 10 am in Room 412 of the Wilson Building. The plan, which reduces the number of PSAs from 83 to 43, is designed to improve police services in DC neighborhoods and enhance public involvement in community policing. For more information, including maps of the proposed PSAs and police districts, visit http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/PSAs_proposed.shtm

Harbor Patrol at Washington Boat Show. Officers assigned to the MPDC Harbor Patrol Unit will participate in the 43rd Annual Washington Boat, distributing safety information and answering questions about legal requirements, safety classes and other topics of interest for boaters in DC. The Boat Show runs at the Washington Convention Center from February 18-22. Details on the Harbor Patrol Unit and boating safety are at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/season/harborpatrol.shtm>

① Chief Ramsey this week swore in five newly promoted captains and 22 newly promoted sergeants during promotional ceremonies. All of the new promotees are being assigned to supervisory roles in the police districts.

① The MPDC is celebrating another group of “promotees”: a group of new police canines who successfully completed their training this past week. The new, four-legged members will be assigned to the MPDC’s Canine Unit, which supports a variety of special operations and neighborhood patrols.

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 2/13/04)

- 2004: 27
- 2003: 24
- % Change: +12.5%
- Closure Rate: 63.0% (17 closures)

Adult Arrests (week end. 2/7/04)

- Total: 782
- Drugs: 157
- Homicide: 4
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 15
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 31

Firearm Recoveries (as of 2/10/04)

- February: 78
- 2004 Total: 278

Traffic Fatalities (as of 2/13/04)

- 2004: 5
- 2003: 4
- % Change: 25.0%